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Pulpit

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Preaching

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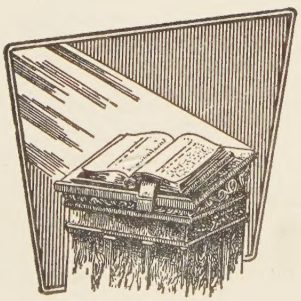

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

This month's first theme, "The Easter Affirmation," offers suggestions and perspectives for Easter preaching. The second, another in our new series, "Great Words of Faith," concerns the church and anticipates by several Sundays the Pentecost witness.

Next month's themes will be "At Home with Christ," messages for the "home" Sundays — Festival of the Christian Home, Mother's Day, Children's Day and Father's Day — and "Lessons in Stewardship."

The May emphases will be "What About the Lord's Day" and "Great Words of Faith: the Word."

———o———

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

The Life of Christ in Materpieces of Art, selected and introduced by Marvin Ross, is a handsome, double-size volume containing forty-four plates in full-color photogravure and an accompanying scriptural text in KJV, plus notes on the paintings and their creators. The artists belong to the various schools of the eleventh through sixteen centuries, a time of great artistic achievement as this selection attests. (Harper & Brothers, $10)

A new edition of **A Dictionary of Hymnology,** edited by John Julian, is now available in a two-volume set. This standard and definitive source book contains the story of Christian hymns, authors and composers, forms, types and styles in 15,000 entries, and

(Continued on page 14)

WORTH QUOTING

E. Paul Hovey
The Federated Churches,
Lewiston, Idaho

A famous pianist said of Cho
"Nocturne in C Sharp Minor"
must tell you about it: Chopin
Liszt, and Liszt told me. In this p
all is sorrow and trouble. Oh
sorrow and trouble! — until he be
to speak to God, to pray; then
all right." That is the way it was
Jesus. He went into Gethseman
the dark; He came out in the
—because He had talked with
He went into Gethsemane in
agony; He came out with the vic
won, and with peace in His so
because He had talked with Goo

It makes all the difference in
tone of voice a man says, "Thy
be done." He may say it in a tor
helpless submission. . . . He may
it as one who has been battered
submission. The words may be
admission of complete defeat.
may say it as one who has
utterly frustrated, and who sees
the dream can never come true.
He may say it with the accen
perfect trust. That is how Jesus
it.

Wm. Barclay in **The Go**
of Luke (Westminster)

* * *

The Christian message is inse
ably concerned with Jesus of
areth, of Gethsemane, of Calvar
the empty tomb. The German p
sopher Lessing once urged th

(Continued on page 15)

Pulpit Preaching

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EVERETT W. PALMER
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The Easter Affirmation

E UP AND LIVE!

Everett W. Palmer, First Methodist Church, Glendale, California

That I may know him and the power of his resurrection. Philippians 3:10.

This Jesus God raised up, of that we are all witnesses. Acts 2:32.

at can surpass an early morn- April, especially after a good Birds sing like an angel choir, before the sun wakes up. You up an empty street through the and the grey dawn. The air s fresh and clean. It is beautiful voman on her wedding day. You the sun peak over the shoulder hill. It disappears momentarily a blanket of clouds, like a y man finding it difficult to out of bed. But before long ack in view, stretching its mus- surmounting the hill, lifting the last of the night. So, like wing flame, the sun brings in lory of a new day.

meet another early riser com- the street. By the tilt of his and the swing of his stride he to be saying, "O, what a beau- norning; O, what a wonderful Everything has a glad word for Everything seems to say: "The has ended. A miracle has been ght. A new day is here. Wake d — live!"

t is what the first Easter meant friends of Jesus. Behind it was ark night of discouragement, panic, betrayal, desertion; the ss of crucifixion, death, and a hewn of rock. Then came that day! A growing flame of hope ith began to lift away the dark- Half-dazed, bewildered people d their eyes in amazement that ght had ended, that the glory of a new day was beginning. They heard it saying to them in meaning vast and profound, "Wake up and — Live!"

This they did! In the city where once they hid and cowered, they walked unashamed and unafraid. To the same people from whom once they fled in cowardice and confusion, they preached with conviction and power. They had something tremendous to say, the mightiest truth the human mind can know, truth which can make new men and a new world. As Peter proclaimed in that first Christian sermon at Pentecost, they were witnesses to a Risen Christ, the Son of God, Saviour of the world, alive forevermore. And, as history tells, they proclaimed their witness not only with their lips but with their lives!

To an alien world, to confused, cynical, despairing, sin-dominated men, they declared: "The night has ended. Open your eyes to the Light of a new day. Stop being afraid of life. You are born for a nobler destiny than you dreamed. There is one who can strip away your grave-clothes of fear and despair. There is a hand that will help you push aside that stone of self-defeat. There is one who can raise you from your tomb of surrender to evil and the death that is sin. Christ has risen! God has spoken! Easter is the thunder of His voice. A miracle like that of Creation has occurred. Hence, we know for a sure-

ty that the power of the universe is in support of Jesus Christ, that everything for which he spent Himself will win in the end. The God whose face we have seen in Him, lives and reigns! Wherefore, wake up and — live!"

On this message the Christian Church was founded. From it the Church today derives its life, its purpose, and its power. Because of it, the Church has survived all that evil men have devised to destroy it, and today numbers more members than any empire on earth.

I

To begin, let us break open the affirmation of Easter and consider what it says.

Easter declares: "Believe in the supernatural. Believe there is more to Reality than man and his measure. Believe there is Something bigger, stronger, wiser, nobler, than men. Believe in God. Believe in the truth about God. He is not a vast abstraction, an eternal syllogism for the convenience of philosophy. He is not a helpless creature shackled by his own laws, a prisoner captive of His own creation. He is a loving Father, ever present to sustain and succor His children, free to direct Nature for man's good. Believe in the rationality of interpreting the universe in terms of its best. Believe that in the life and deeds, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we see best of all what God is and does. Believe there is a Greatness about us, above us, beyond us; a Greatness purposive and redemptive, free to work creatively in and with His Creation."

Easter declares: "Believe you have infinite worth. Christ died on the Cross for you. That is your value. You are more precious in God's eyes than a million stars. Death does not make you a discard. You are so precious God will not cast you off merely because your body wears out. Death is not the end of the journey. It is only a turn in the road which brings you closer to the greatness God. God gave His son for you. are more precious to Him than own being. The stuff of eternity in you. You are made in His image, made to be with Him fore and forever!"

Easter declares: "God did not Jesus down." The miracle of the surrection is God's way of sayi "This is my beloved Son, hear H His words are my words. His de are my deeds. His triumph can your triumph!" It is God sayi "Know that in the end it is love, hate, which wins; truth, not which prevails; goodness, not e which conquers. Know that Life, death, is King!" The miracle of surrection is God saying to each us: "Stop being afraid of life. Beca He lives, you too can live. Push as the stone of self-defeat. Take those grave-clothes of surrender evil and death. Come out of y tomb. Wake up and — live!"

Believe in the supernatural. lieve you are of infinite worth. lieve God did not let Jesus do That is a sample of what it me to join in the glad shout of Eas "He is risen!" It is the greatest t our minds can know, the grea cause our hearts and hands serve.

II

Now, does someone say, "That a wondrous sound, but it is too m for me; I can't believe it"? Proba all of us at one time or another h entertained such an opinion. By ure we are like the disciples first heard the astonishing news seems too great and too good to true.

Eugene O'Neill, in his play, I arus Laughed, represents the di ples as frightened by that miracle made them afraid, observes O'N because it suddenly shattered t small world. It revealed a world big for them and demanded th likewise to be big. But, to be gia says O'Neill, made them dizzy. T

ed to remain as little men in a
little world of human dimen-
s.

at is everyone's problem in res-
of Easter. It suddenly shatters
small world of human perspec-
. It reveals a world too big for
nd demands us to be big, also.
to be giants makes us dizzy. We
er to be little men, safe and
sturbed in a little world of hu-
dimensions. However, this we
v is the weakling's way, the
rd's choice.

ere is protection against such
. It is to face realistically the
native which remains. In a pro-
d sense, if Easter cannot be true,
the Cross and the tomb have
last word with us and with all
kind; then the best in life is at
mercy of the worst; then to be
y is foolish and to be evil is wise.
aster cannot be true, then we
conclude with Bertrand Russell
"brief and powerless is man's
on him and all his face the slow,
doom falls, pitiless and dark."
must say with Mencken that the
os is a gigantic flywheel making
0 revolutions per minute and
is a sick fly taking a dizzy ride
." However we may define our
t, if Easter cannot be on it."
ever we may define our plight,
ster cannot be true, we are com-
d to accept a view of life that
s man so cheap and his aspi-
ns so futile any tyranny of earth
stified, any surrender to weak-
sanctioned, any evil condoned.
fore anyone turns aside from
r, let him face frankly the al-
tive which remains. Then he
understand something of what
meant when he wrote: "If Christ
t risen from the dead, then we
men are most miserable"; and
n yet another occasion he cried:
at I might know him and the
r of his resurrection!"

r higher nature bids us follow
to master our doubts and scorn
fears; to stride forth into the
new and bigger world truth opens to us, rising to the greatness truth requires of us. So, the best in us calls us to believe in the message of Easter. How can our heart be content or our mind be at peace with less than what Easter tells us about God and the universe, our own nature and destiny?

III

Then this remains. If we believe in Easter, it is for us to live so men may know we believe. That was the life-changing, world-shaking power of first-century Christians. They lived so men knew they believed. They were awake with new life — life that startled a stagnant, slumbering world and shook sleeping men wide awake. They preached not only words but their lives. If they had not, the church would have died at birth.

That is our duty, as it was theirs. Merely to sing the Easter music and nod assent to the preacher is trivial as sawdust unless we wake up and live so men have reason to know we believe. The Christian message, towering truth though it be, lacks convincing appeal until it is transparent by life, your life and mine.

The story is told of a small boy who had changed into his swimming trunks and was ready to dive into a public swimming pool. He checked himself, looking at something in his hand. Then making a tour of the place, he peered thoughtfully into the faces of various individuals who were lounging about in beach chairs. After completing his tour of inspection, he returned to a middle-aged woman who sat quietly knitting. "Lady," he asked cautiously, "do you happen to go to church?" She nearly dropped her needles. "Why, yes," she answered, "as a matter of fact, I'm a minister's wife." He stood and surveyed her in silence. Finally he made up his mind. "Then, lady," he asked, "will you hold my quarter for me until I get out of the pool?"

That lad believed in the value of

the church. Its claim had validity for him because someone previously had given him reason to believe in it, someone had demonstrated its truth.

Of course, the reverse is no less true. The worst enemy of Jesus Christ is not the man who openly denies Him. His most damaging foe is the man who affirms Christian belief, but lives as though it doesn't matter much.

On this Easter Sunday, let each of us search his heart and ask, "Lord, is it I?"

Have I been asleep, wasting my life in service of trivial loyalties? Then this day of the Risen Christ I will let Him rise to the place He deserves in my thoughts, affections, and service. I will wake up and — live!

Have I been asleep, begrudging opportunities for Christian service, complaining when asked to work and give in His name? Then this Resurrection Day, I will let Him resurrect me from the grave of selfishness. I will remember the price He paid for the church and henceforth glady what I can. I will wake up and live!

Have I been asleep, belittling Ch with half-hearted service, neglect the practice of prayer and the sources of the Bible? Have I b following Him afar off? Then on His Victory Day I will let Him me anew. I will wake up and — H Have I been asleep, slandering Ch with conduct and attitudes unwor His name, making it hard for o men to believe in Him by what I Then on this Easter Day I will His pardon, accept His forgiven and begin to walk in His steps. I wake up and — live!

The message of Easter! Wher a truth more deserving of our mi Where a Saviour more worthy of heart? Where a Cause that m more of our love and our toil brings an end to the night. It is p er which makes for new men an new world. It says to you and "Wake up and — live!"

THE MESSAGE OF EASTER

Louis J. Kovar, Central Presbyterian Church, St. Paul, Minnesota

The heralds of Jesus, the voices of angelic choirs, in a thousand tongues, in a million ways are retelling the glorious message of Easter: "Jesus Christ is risen today." The victorious account of Easter girds the earth. From the mountains and from the seas, from the hills and from the plains the hallowed story is pervading our planet. It is Easter in Rome and behind the Iron Curtain in Moscow. It is Easter in London and Madrid. It is Easter in strife-ridden Jerusalem and overcrowded Tokyo. It is Easter in the frozen tundra of the Arctic and the ice-bound crags of the Antarctic. It is Easter in the highlands of Tibet and in far-away Australia. It is Easter in jungled Africa, in equatorial South America, in wartorn Europe, in segregated Asia; it is Easter in America. It is Easter in every continent, in all the world

Songs of men and angels say
Jesus Christ is risen today.

Since the dawn of the human the hope of immortality has been eternal day-spring in the hearts men. Men do not want to die. E race and every age of man manifested this hope! Scan the p of the Old Testament. How revea and prophetic are the words of

For I know that My Redme
lives,
and at last he will stand up
the earth;
And after my skin has been de
troyed,
then without my flesh I sha
see God.

Heed the Hebrews' reference Sheol, the temporary abode of dead. Sing the Psalms which

ent reference to life after death: thou dost not give me up to or let thy godly one see the Psalm 16:10). Delve into the re- religions of savagery and witch- Watch the pagans of Africa their dead facing the East that might be awakened by the sun- f the future life. Marvel at the ration which the early Amer- Indian made for the Happy ing Ground. Peer into the Egyp- ombs to see the food and para- alia to be used by the Pharaohs e future kingdom. Ponder the gs of Macchabeus and Josephus ey refer to life after death. Re- with the Greek philosophers in speculation upon life beyond rave. When Socrates was about e, he gathered his friends and nts about himself and encourag- em in the doctrine of immortal- eel the rhythmic pulse of nat- s she gives birth to new life in pringtime: the shooting grass, udding tree, the regular return e bird and the bee,

e secret murmur of the soul
ls of the world to be,
travelers hear the billows roll
ore they reach the sea.

Martineau expertly observed: do not believe in immortality se we can prove it, but we try ve it because we cannot help ing it." But before the advent us Christ man had no proof to ntiate his eternal aspirations. esire was a mere theory, a doc- f theology, a yearning for vic- ver death.

II

n early one morning, as it be- dawn nineteen centuries ago, Mgadalene and the other wo- astened to the tomb to express love for the Master who had rucified and buried. They bore to anoint His body. "And be- there was a great earthquake; angel of the Lord descended heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will find him. Lo, I have told you." So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, 'Hail!' And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me'" (Matthew 28:2-10).

And it came to pass that Jesus, the risen Lord, made five separate personal appearances to different groups of people on that first Easter day. In subsequent days the Savior, whom death could not hold in the grave, made several appearances to convince the disciples and others that he was alive. As many as five hundred people saw Him on one occasion. They talked with Jesus; they walked and reasoned with the Master; they ate with Him; they saw and felt the scars of the risen Lord who had been crucified, dead, and buried. It was not easy to believe the report, but they verified the truth of His resurrection.

We shall always be grateful for doubting Thomas who bodly challenged the report: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe" (John 20:25). Eight days later Jesus met the demand. While the disciples were assmbled in the upper room the Lord appeared in their midst; and with the other disciples as witnesses Jesus said to

the doubter, "Thomas, put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing" (John 20:27). Then Thomas, convinced by a profound discovery, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, made one of the greatest confessions in history: "My Lord and my God." And this mighty avowal drew a marvelous promise from the lips of our Savior: "Thomas, you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed" (John 20:29). Those who saw the Lord were able to say, "He is risen indeed." They saw the first fruit of them that slept. The cherished desire of the human heart was no longer a mere speculation, it was a historic reality; and now the blessed promise belongs to all "who have not seen and yet believe."

The blessing comes to us as we proclaim the eternal truth: "He is not dead! He is risen!" But here is the magnanimous promise: "Because I live, ye will live also. . . I am the resurrection and life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall be live; and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:25-2 Thus Jesus Christ pushed aside invisible wall of mystery and opened the door of life eternal to who will believe in Him.

The glorious message of Eas brings us renewed assurance, on t happy morn, that physical death not the end of life, but rather the ginning of a higher and better l a life from which the limitations the earth and human flesh are moved. Like the apostle Paul, too, can challenge the claims death, "O death, where is thy tory? O death, where is thy stin And when our summons comes join that "innumerable carava which leads through the silent h of death, by faith we shall live w God. Our present hope and doctr will become a living experience the mansions of eternal life.

So today we join the sacre throng
To proclaim the jubilant song:
Songs of men and angels say
Jesus Christ is risen today.

"Thanks be to God, who gives us victory through our Lord Je Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57).

JESUS CHRIST IS ALIVE!

Aaron N. Meckel, First Congregational Church, St. Petersburg, Florid

Dr. R. W. Dale, renowned minister of Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham, sat in his study one day, contemplating a sermon on the triumph of Christ. What could he say that would adequately convey that triumph? The famous preacher took a pencil from his pocket and wrote out these words, "**Jesus Christ Is Alive!**" As he looked at those words, their truth and radiance seemed to burn their intensity into his inner being. They thrilled him through and through. Dale walked back and forth in his study repeating, "Jesus Christ is Alive! is alive!" Is it any wonder that of Carr's Lane Church it was said that every service was characterized by the power of the Resurrection? On this great Day we do not argue. We sert the fact of the Resurrection our Lord. We do not conjure theories to prove the fact of perso immortality. We are witnesses to trustworthiness of what Darwin ferred to as the "grand instinct."

"We will let others argue; tis' musicians know!"

We want to point out a few of tremendous consequences that foll in the wake of the mightiest even history: "Now is Christ risen fr the dead!"

I

For one thing, as a result of greatest event of history, there a the one greatest institution of hum

he Church militant and triumph-
That church was born the other
of the empty tomb. This throws
light upon these words of C. H.
d, the famous British student of
Bible and early Christianity: "The
incontestible result of the life,
h, and resurrection of Jesus
st is the emergence of the Christ-
Church." After that there could
o doubt about the message of the
ch and its ministry. It was "Jesus
the Resurrection."
mething wonderful happened at
first Easter which lifted the
s of empires off their hinges and
ed the stream of civilization into
channels. Something which gave
w date to time and a new dimen-
to the human soul. Something,
eive it how you will that chang-
company of timid and hesitant
into a group of heroes and
yrs for the Faith. Something
ened which has kept the church
in the world, as one of the
test powers for good, and that for
nineteen hundred years. No
or phantasy can accomplish
Only an event, and a reality.
know that Christ arose from the
because of the wonder that fact
wrought in this needy world.
certain skeptic was attempting to
le the Christian faith. "Christ
st another ordinary man," said
like you and myself." Immediate-
th flashed back the reply: "Well,
ght ahead! All you have to do
hieve the spiritual pre-eminence
hrist is to give to humanity the
undest philosophy of life it has
known; get yourself crucified
cross because of your unswerv-
yalty to it; rise again from the
once you have been done to
, — and then **get humanity to**
ve it for nineteen hundred
." When our Lord Jesus rose
the dead that first Easter, the
h **triumphant rose with Him!**

II

ow is Christ arisen from the dead!" That means for the believing Christian the end of cynicism and defeat, while it makes of **life a sacred trust and a magnificent adventure!** How that needs to be said in this needy day! There must be people listening to this very message who are to be reckoned among the **living dead:** folk out of whose life the vital tang of immortality has gone. For remember, friend, **you don't need to die in order to be dead, nor do you need to be translated to experience the quality of life which is eternal.** Real Christians have the witness of life eternal in them. "If ye then **be risen** with Christ," wrote one of them. For the average person, the resurrection of Christ simmers down pretty well to this issue: if Christ be not risen from the dead, then as a Russian song has it **Nichavo!** Nothing Matters! Then sow your wild oats, put your passions in the saddle and let them ride you. Then eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we shall be dead! How glibly we moderns use the terms, ethics and morality. Friends, these connotations of our larger life become worthless abstractions apart from faith in personal immortality. For look! If this life be all, if there be no judgment in which the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, if no Infinite Accountant who shall balance moral accounts, no eternity to which we bring our much or our little — then what boots it? **Why** all the tears and the self-denial and sacrifice that go into the building of fine Christian character! Then "life's a thing of sound and fury, signifying nothing!" **But if,** as our Divine Faith teaches, and as humanity's greatest hearts have believed and taught, this life is but a training ground and a vestibule for larger, ampler life; and if we must sometime look into the searching eyes of that One who gave Himself for us, the Just for the unjust, **that is different.** Ethics and morality become implemented with spiritual significance. Then, immortality is not only a gift,

but an achievement! "And only they who strive mightily shall possess it!"

This present generation, s a d l y munching the sterile rinds of futility, needs nothing so much as the gift of God at Easter: an incursion of life-giving eternal Faith. **Lorado Taft** has warned us that our art and literature must get more of the "hint of eternity" into it else it shall bear no significance for the present and no carrying power for the future. You can gauge the spirit of an age by the quality and texture of its art, literature, music. Put it down to their wisdom and credit: the immortals created and the saints lived with their eyes on the horizons above! **We are not artful because we are not beliefful.** An age which worships idols, fashions, trinkets — not monuments! "The hint of eternity!" — how we need it! Minus **that** even the **witness of the church** palls and fails. Men begin to doubt that the "leopard can change his spots and the Ethiopian his skin." Missionary zeal and giving declines. The Kingdom waits. The redemptive urge forsakes preaching. And tell me please, How shall we go on contending for democracy, and face up to the brutal truculence of dictators who **defy Easter,** if man be only the plaything of a moment? How shall we Christians condemn the war monster which desecrates that human personality Christ has purchased through his death? In the last resort Easter means God's evaluation of life. Apart from faith in that personal immortality which the Gospel teaches, we clutch an empty husk! Verily, if in this life **only** we have hope of Christ we are of all men the most miserable!

III

But **Now is Christ risen from the dead!** And so the greatest enemy of all, **death, is defeated!** The Christ of Christianity could not be holden of death. Midnight gloom gives way to radiant morn. He who faced life at its worst, emerges the Universal Conqueror, with the keys of death a hell swinging at His girdle. Hea that had grown despondent on t Emmaus road now stand beside empty tomb, while the triumph shout is lifted: "The head that or was crowned with thorns, is crown with glory **now!**"

"This universe can not have cha as its crown," said that incorrigibl optimist, Lotze. How our finest min are turning more and more to t Divine truth that this univese is n a bedlam, but our Father's hou that it is indwelt with law, meani purpose; that a man, if he accepts t challenge, may build an imperishal soul in it. Mr. Marvin Black in stupendous book, **The Pendulu Swings Back,** assures us that taps l sounded over the corpse of materi ism; that our first-rate social a physical scientists are preaching th life is dynamic, not static; that, stri ly speaking, there is no such thing matter, but that even the tiniest ato is a whirlpool of life, energy. All t while that the unregenerate intell has only a "worm's eye view of t universe," the spiritual insight of t seers and prophets and saints in Reality can be trusted. Write it large letters across the borderline our best thinking and living: **The is no death!**

Radiant and apostolic Christian scoffed at death because it believ that, once and for all, Christ had d stroyed its power. "If we die w Him we shall also live with Hi **Shame** on us modern Christians, after centuries we have less heroi If we apalogize for, rather than co fidently proclaim, our Faith! If in t present Armageddon we tremble a sorrow as "those who have no hop Christians, yours is a Resurrect Faith! Yours is a Living Lord, w faced sin, death, and paganism, a laid these grim spectres low! A n urrection faith is, by its very natu unconquerable. America at her b has always believed that.

ON EASTER MORN

Charles L. Seasholes, First Baptist Church, Dayton, Ohio

gnificant days have their appro-
te greetings and the appropriate
not casual but meaningful, for
day of days in the church year
A Joyous Easter." Not merriment,
just happiness, but joy on Easter
n.

I

here was joy on that first Easter
n, so let us try to understand it
see if we can appropriate it for
elves this Easter morn. The joy
that first Easter morn was joy
came in a sequence. It was a se-
nce of the days, Thursday, Fri-
Saturday, and then, Easter Day.
h day had its place in that se-
nce that culminated in the joy on
er morn.

hursday may best be character-
by a phrase used of American
ign policy once, "agonizing re-
aisal." It was that for Jesus in
Garden of Gethsemane. He had
preaching, teaching, proclaim-
the Kingdom, and the people
d Him gladly. But then evil men
ed against Him and the way was
ked to that fulfillment of His
. In the garden He faced that
ged situation and agonizingly re-
aised it in terms of the will of
. The Gospel of John does not re-
Gethsemane as an incident but
es give us the inner thoughts and
ls of Jesus about this whole ap-
al: "What shall I say, 'Father,
me from this hour?' But for this
came I unto this hour." There
something for Him to find and
w as God's will in the changed
reappraised situation. In any
situation for you when plans
to be redrawn and resources ap-
ed and a new direction taken
e, God will be with you as you
His will in working things out
e situation. Thursday may be the
for you of the sequence leading
e joy on Easter.

Friday is Good Friday as we have come to call it, but it was anything but good as men perpetrated it. The enemies of Jesus had their way with Him and did away with Him. But one thing they could not do to Him. They could not make their way His way. He held to His own way to the end. Their enmity met His forgiveness, their hatred His love, their cross of enmity for Him He made His cross of redemption for them and for us, and God made the outcome of that Friday a **good** Friday. So whenever you take the things which others do to you or life does to you and allow God's grace to make them redemptive by your own way which may be His way, Friday may be Good Friday in the sequence of days toward Easter.

Then came Silent Saturday. Nothing happened and nothing is recorded. But Saturday serves a gracious purpose lest Easter should come too close after Good Friday. Silent Saturday gives time to work its silent healing-power. Silent Saturday may be like the prolonged cold of this year's spring. But all the time we have been confident that something was germinating beneath the cold and that God's springtime would come. "'Tis the spring of souls today, Christ has burst His prison," and Easter morn can come for us out of silent Saturday. Perhaps you have felt you never could be ready for Easter after your Good Friday, whenever it was, this year or farther back. But Silent Saturday has intervened of whatever duration and is now over. This is Easter morn and you may find not merriment or happiness but joy too full for words on Easter morn.

II

In the second place, the joy on that first Easter morn was joy that came as a surprise. The disciples were as-

tonished, incredulous. Their initial incredulity carries credence for us, their surprise brings us assurance. This was no wishful thinking, this was something that came that they first could not believe for joy. Their joy may be ours, not only in the particular Easter assurance, but in situations generally when something like what bothered and worried the women on the way to the tomb—"Who will roll away the stone?"—looms before us. Some great obstacle that weighs heavily on our minds and hearts and that we feel blocks our way ahead, we may find it not there at all, because the stone has been rolled away in some unexpected way by some power we had not counted on and that surprise may be God's surprise for us.

That joy on that first Easter morn came as an earnest, a foretaste, a promise of joy forevermore. We have really three Easters to think of, the first is the initial Easter of the disciples and their Risen Lord and its joy. Then there comes second what Henry Sloan Coffin called "the inward Easter." He said that Christ first brings us an inward Easter and then sets before us the Easter prospect of deathless life. This inward Easter is what the New Testament rings with, a life risen with Christ, something like a resurrection within us in which men may rise above narrowness and doubt and fear and grief into a new level of life which is being risen with Christ. This then is what points to and gives us assurance of the third Easter which we may call the ultimate Easter of life forever more. Two simple questions often come to our minds about such a life beyond. The first is, "Where is it and where will we be?" There is no map, no geography of such a life for this is not a space — time continuum matter — at all. But even now as Dr. Charles Gilkey once said, "In this life it is not where we are so much as whom we are with that matters." For that we have the assurance of Jesus, "Where I am there may be also."

The second question is, "What w it be like?" We cannot comprehe what it will be like. "Eye has n seen nor ear heard, neither have e tered into the heart of man the thin which God hath prepared for the that love Him." The caterpillar the cocoon can hardly conceive free life in a different realm of t brilliant butterfly; the unborn ba can hardly conceive of what life l yond the crisis of birth can be. is not conceivable for us what it w be like. But there are some thin of suggestion and analogy that le us toward it.

Surely it is not to be just lo drawn-out existing. Someone has sa that people who now find it hard spend an afternoon without boredo certainly would not be blessed w an eternity long, drawn-out. It rather fullness of life. Or maybe li something that a young soldier wro in his letters from the First Wo War about experiences such as tho of great music in which how lo they lasted is not a matter at all membered. Then he said, "If o such times could be conserved a all the rest drained off." Dean Sp ry speaks of this, in citing those l ters, in the phrase from someone e "an eternity of life's rare, best m ments." It may be like that!

Fullness of joy or the joy of f fillment mean the same thing for j is fulfillment and fulfillment brin joy. Life beyond may well be co plete fulfillment and joy as one cl sic phrase puts it "the souls of ju men made perfect."

But there is still something of a venture and richness of life in f fillment. Professor A. E. Taylor England once said that there's a d ference between development towa fulfillment and development in f fillment. An artist, he says, may ha reached the place of complete m tery so far as it is possible for h But he will still go on producing

ite variety of mastery works of vithout necessarily even trying to e each better than the last. So e can be a life of complete ful- ent in which there is still scope opportunity for variety of ex- sion of graciousness and good-

III

e sometimes use the expression loesn't add a thing." I shall tell of an incident that in one way n't add a thing. At a social gath- in our church a little over two s ago, a grandmother held her grandson through most of the ing. The grandmother is not frail the baby was not inordinately y, but it did tie her down from cipating fully in the occasion, so y lovely person came and reliev- er and held the child. Someone e to her about it and she replied, ve children." Someone has re- y recalled that incident, for we all recalling things about that n in a living and loving memo- way. In one way, that incident not add a thing — not add a to her, for she was already htful, altogether lovely and lov- but it did add something to the who remembered it and now s it and will ever remember her It added something to me per- y, for it was my grandson she And all that I had heard and n in general of her thoughtful- nd loveliness is now related to d something was added in that us expression on her part. So s can be added to one another e fulfillment and still the devel- nt in fulfilment in life beyond.

e real question should be not, will it be like but whom will like? The New Testament tells t the answer to that "that we be like Him, for we shall see s He is" — not with these phy- eyes that need crutches, but that spiritual contemplation we have now in life — some- thing like the reflection in a mirror — and even with that Paul tells us we can be changed from likeness to likeness toward His likeness. Then it will be face to face and likeness fulfilled.

Churches with liturgical practices have appropriated colors for the church seasons. They carry the color scheme through with their altar furnishings and even with change of vestments. The Lenten color is purple, penitential purple. They carry this through right up to Easter and Easter's color is white.

Purple is also the color of the early morning, the earliest early morning. So someone wrote the line, "When purple morning breaketh." That is what the first color of the morning is, as it comes out of the blackness of the night. "When purple morning breaketh, when the bird waketh." But the reason that line was written about purple morning was because of a verse in the Psalms, "When I awake, I am still with thee." So the full stanza reads:

Still, still with Thee, when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh and shadows flee,
Fairer than dawning, lovelier than the daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with Thee.

So it is any morning, any Easter morning. But we look forward to the ultimate Easter morning:

So shall it be at last in that bright morning
When the soul wakens and life's shadows flee
Oh, in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning
Shall rise the glorious thought, I am with Thee.

Paul says, "Our mortality shall put on immortality," or symbolically we may say it, we shall change the purple robes of life's earthly penitential pilgrimage for robes resplendent white of eternal life's fulfillment.

Ten thousand times ten thousand,

in sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
storm up the steepes of light.
. . . . "What rush of alleluias fills
all the earth and sky!
Alleluias of joy on that Easter morn!

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Books for Pulpit Preaching —

(Continued from page 2)

also includes a first-line index of 30,000 hymns. (Dover Publications, 1768 pp., $15)

The Preacher's Task and the Stone of Stumbling by D. T. Niles, Ceylonese Christian leader, is the 1957 Lyman Beecher Lectures. In preparing these lectures the author secured letters from a Hindu, a Buddist and a Muslin giving reasons why men of those faiths could not accept Christ. Each referred to a central Christian affirmation which was unacceptable. The author then re-evaluates Christianity in terms of its cardinal doctrines and in a manner reflecting a boldness of profession, a discernment of understanding, and a spiritual awareness that is often missing in the so-called "mother churches." (Harper & Brothers, 125 pp., $2)

Letters to the Seven Churches by William Barclay is a helpful and illuminating exposition and interpretation of the background and meaning of Revelation. The author's aim is to show that Revelation is both intelligible and high relevant. This he accomplishes in well-expressed and thoughtful writing. (Abingdon Press, 111 pp., $2)

Three new titles have been added to the splendid "Layman's Theological Library." **A Faith for the Nations** by Charles W. Forman is a suggestive, quotable and positive introduction to Christianity as the faith which furnishes the only promise for the unification of mankind. **Making Ethical Decisions** by Howard Clark Kee is an informal and engaging presentation of the bases for decisions that must be made in the various contexts of life. **Life, Death and Destiny** Roger L. Shinn concerns the Chri ian meaning of history, God in h tory, and the nature of life and dea and offers both the Christian po tions and a keen analysis of su Christian explanataions. (Westmi ter Press, $1 each)

Any sermon collection by J. W lace Hamilton is welcome inde His latest volume, **Who Goes The** is sub-titled, "What and Where God?" The twelve sermons center aspects or meanings of God — fatherhood, faithfulness, love, pow sovereignty, providence, among o ers — and they reflect the vivid w ing and vigorous thought which ha gained for his earlier books a wi and fruitful audience. (Fleming Revell, 154 pp., $2.50)

They Knew Jesus contains twen four narratives which tell the st of Jesus as seen through the e of various Gospel personalities. Th persuasive and convincing narrativ based on a judicious handing of N Testament sources, are intimate a warm. Their usefulness in chu and school, for young and old, immediately apparent. The aut is George W. Cornell, an Associat Press editor. (William Morrow & C 288 pp., $3.75)

Early Sites of Christianity by Pe Bamm, a German physician, has h a remarkably large sale in its origi German edition. The author tra the travels of the apostles in Gospels and Acts and gives per ent comments and observations wh make the hallowed and histori places live in the reader's imagi tion. His insights seem more p etrating and his observations m spiritually attuned than those fo in the similar books. (Panth Books, 256 pp., many photograp $4.50)

The Spirit of American Christia by Ronald E. Osborn of Butler U versity will keep many a pastor re ing late into the night, as it did

ewer. The author highlights the orical sources, the development, ber and traditions of American estantism in a book that is far- ing and profund, stimulating and iring. History and evaluation, ific instance and sweeping gen- zation, sobering reflection and hetic insight are the components his readable and vivid portrait ie American faith and testimony. per & Brothers, 241 pp., $3.75)

ice Geer Kelsey, one of the best- vn and most capable writers for rch School children, has added w book to her commendable col- ons of children's stories. **Seven- ite Stories for Church and Home** des thirty-six stories and story- ons which represent a wide of interests and valuable spirit- essons. (Abingdon Press, 128 pp.,

tion Under God, edited by ces Brentano, is an excellent an- gy, broad in representation and rning in selection, which mirrors eligious motivations and spirit of lemocracy. The writers are from eriods of our history and their s concern our heritage, freedom, ctions, problems, welfare, and posture. This splendid volume be a useful sourcebook for the r. (Channel Press, 362 pp., $5)

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h Quoting —

(Continued from page 2)

mpossible to make the truth de- nt upon the contingent events istory. To many people that sensible. . . But the truth of ianity does depend upon the ical facts that Jesus lived in a ular place at a particular time, He died, that He rose again. was what created Christianity. was the burden of the first hing — not 'the Fatherhood of and the brotherhood of man'. Hill of Calvary rather than the t of the Sermon stood out in the minds of the early Christians.

This is not true of all religions. Forget me if only you remember the teaching, said the Buddha. Judaism and Parseeism would not be seriously affected if it were proved that Moses and Zoroaster were merely legendary: the teaching would still remain. But there would be nothing left of Christianity if Jesus were shown to be a myth. . . 'Jesus is Lord' was the first creed of the Church.

Hugh Martin in **Luke's Portrait of Jesus** (SCM Press)

* * *

Recently, on our way home from New York to California, my daughter became ill and was hospitalized in a small town in Iowa for three weeks. I stayed with her, but shortly before leaving I had to cash a check to get some expense money. I went to the local bank, wondering what to do about identification in a strange town. The teller glanced at me, then at the check and, without hesitation, pushed the currency through the window.

Surprised, I asked, "Don't you need any identification?"

He said, "No, I saw you in church last Sunday."

Family Weekly

* * *

Clare Booth Luce quotes the motto of Marshal Foch, the hero of Verdun: "There are no hopeless situations; there are only men who have grown hopeless about them." The Marshal was right. . . . Maybe your little farm, or store, or job, or apartment seems drab, and your state quite hopeless. But it really isn't. That is what Jesus sensed when He visited with discouraged people in Palestine. He kept trying to tell them there was something more than the tyranny of Rome. But people had to get beneath the surface of life to find the wealth at their doorstep. There was something beside hardship and discouragement, there was joy in knowing that, as

Charles Beard put it, "something magnificent is going on here" . . . You may discover today that your hand is better than you think.

Harold Blake Walker

* * *

The first film of ice is scarcely perceptible. Keep the water stirring, and you will prevent the ice from hardening. But once it films over and remains so, it thickens over the surface, and it thickens still. At last it is so solid that a wagon might be drawn over the frozen water. So with our conscience. It films over gradually and at last it becomes hard, unfeeling, and then it can bear a weight of iniquity.

Bishop Simpson

* * *

A small boy misquoting John 14:2 (KJV) recited: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have TO HOLD you." If it were not so who would hold us? But because it is so God does hold us.

E. Paul Hovey

* * *

Someone said, "The love of Christ hath a height without a top, a depth without a bottom, and a length without an end, and a breadth without a limit." No wonder the Apostle Paul desired that we be "rooted and grounded" in that love, that we may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that (we) might be filled with all the fullness of God."

M. P. Tyerman

* * *

"If only I could see my temptations as I see other people's," said a girl the other day, "they wouldn't be a bit hard to fight. Other people's temptations look so ugly and mean and foolish. But my own temptations come with a rosy light about them, so that I don't see how hateful they are until afterward." There are two ways to see temptations in their true colors. One is to pray about them, to bring them into the clear light of God's presence. The other is to say, "How would this look if someone else yielded to it?"

Foward

* * *

In every heart there is a cross and a throne, and each is occupied. Jesus is on the throne, ruling, self is on the cross, dying. But if self is being obeyed, and so is ruling, then it is on the throne; and self on the throne means that Jesus has been put on the cross.

M. Ray McKay

* * *

The cross is the last argument of God.

Charles H. Spurgeon

* * *

It is really wonderful to live a life of faith. Sometimes it reminds me of the ski tow I saw at a skiing ground in Austria. People would come a long way, some of them by train, some by car, and some by other means; and when they arrived, it was still necessary to go up the steep, snow-covered mountainside to reach the peak. But there was the ski tow, and as they came one by one, they only needed to catch a rope and off they went toward the sunlit peak, and the higher they climbed the wider the horizon became, and the more enthralling view they had of the beauty of the surrounding landscape.

This is what the life of faith is like. You come along, catch the rope, and off you go. It took me a long time and a lot of trouble to get to the bottom of the mountain, where I could catch my life line. The trouble was that I had to do this for myself; nobody on earth could do it for me, and I think this is the case with every human being. There is a "life line" for everybody, and all of us have to catch hold of our own accord, but once we take hold of it everything becomes so simple and easy and beautiful. I am holding on to it now as off I go toward the peak where I expect a new and amazing world

ead before my wondering eyes. is is definitely what the Master sed. (John 8:31-32).

haps it will take a long time to the peak. Perhaps I shall never it, but I will strive for it to the f my days. . . It is a thrilling ey; I am just holding on to the the word of God, and it is tak- ne up toward the heights. I never have believed that ian life could have so many , so much joy and happiness in

Joseph Nemes in **Signs in the Storm** (Abingdon)

* * *

ere is in Jesus Christ more merit righteousness than the whole has need of.

John Bunyan

* * *

eirs is an endless road, a hope- naze, who seek for goods before seek God.

Bernard of Clairvaux

* * *

cial injustice is bad business. is no segregation in the stores. s hope the Christian conscience e decisive, but, failing this, let glad that for once the pocket- is its ally.

Walker Percy in **Common- weal**

* * *

Christ we are brought together, er with him and with one an- As there is one loaf from which e pieces come, so all of us are one in our participation in the loaf. Here Paul reminded his h friends of their old customs, ling something of a parallel. who ate at the sacrificial meal partners in the presence of God. s Christ's purpose to make us ne with him and one with each But he must be the host, not other power or some human be- ho wishes to be at the center ngs. In obedience to his love we allow him to stand above every ence of opinion or custom that can so easily separate us from one another. When Christ has his way with us, we become brothers.

* * *

There are men and women who never find their proper place in life. They are like bent nails which a carpenter will discard. But some of the bent ones manage to get straightened out and become useful people. Most of the people Jesus met were bent nails — among them Peter, James, John, and Mary Magdalene. He made them straight. Today we can remember with comfort the great words, "None shall be lost." There is a straightening power in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and in the Christian faith that God is infinite love.

Carleton Brooke Miller in **Words to Change Lives**

* * *

In a secular magazine I came upon these memorable words: "There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give to our children. One of these is roots; the other, wings." Here is profound truth. There are of course other things we should like to give to our children, but these two are indeed precious. As Christians we believe in roots, wings — and seeds. It is the business of the church to give men deep roots, and aid them to develop strong wings. Then, indeed, may the Master sow in them the good seed of the Christian gospel.

John C. Walker in **Words to Change Lives**

* * *

A writer of the Middle Ages used this quaint illustration to bring him to the people of his day the love of God. Supposing, he argued, that a king was sitting with his council deliberating on the high affairs of state in his own country and in the surrounding nations, and suddenly he heard within his home the sorrowful cry of a little child who had fallen down or been frightened by a wasp. He would immediately leave the council, said the preacher, and hasten to help the child. Why then do we

think it dishonorable that the King of Kings, who is our Heavenly Father, should consider the affairs of his children?

Archer Wallace

* * *

Cling to the whole Bible, not part of it. A man can't do much with a broken sword.

* * *

Something is wrong inside when Jesus is kept outside.

* * *

When it is hardest to pray, that is the time to pray hardest.

* * *

Most people would die rather than think; in fact they do so.

Bertrand Russell

* * *

"When everybody tends to his own business," writes a newspaper editor, "news is scarce." But wasn't it in the Bible that some offensive person asked: "Am I my brother's keeper?" So perhaps there are occasions when we shouldn't content ourselves merely with attending to our own business.

* * *

Morality without religion is a pleasant place to live in until the heavens grow dark and the storms begin to beat.

J. B. Shaw

* * *

The Bible is the best light for the past, the biggest light for the present, and the brightest light for the future.

John J. Walker

* * *

A mistake is evidence, that someone has tried to do something.

* * *

It is not love of self but hatred of self which is at the root of the troubles that afflict our world.

Eric Hoffer

* * *

Friendship is a mighty factor in this hard world, since by friendship comes self-forgetfulness, and no man does great work unless he forgets self.

Jeffrey Farnol

The Church has been a thorn the flesh to the fashionable think of every day, and to the sel schemers of every age. It represe the common sense or spiritual v of life as opposed to the latest c temporary guesses of scientific spe lation, or the conservative laiss faire of the well-to-do.

J. Edgar Park in **The Mira of Preaching**

* * *

Everything in life has its pr Part of that price is the denial alternatives. . . . For each choice price must be paid that includes pain of getting along without alternative choices.

Percy L. Greaves, Jr.

* * *

The late George Orwell coined word "doublethink" to mean " power of holding two contradict beliefs in one's mind simultaneou and accepting both of them."

Henry Hazlitt

* * *

Genuine good will, springing fr a love for God, neighbor and ones cannot be defeated. The Hebr Christian ethic is not a prescript for failure. It is a prescription for s cess.

Irving E. Howard

* * *

A living church — and yours i living church — is never complet And although you have one of finest churches in the nation, I s cerely hope you do not feel your is done.

You must always remember t a church is more than a building a great church is a great plan, a gr idea. . . It must ever be a continu thing, a thing that never ends.

Sigurd Anderson

* * *

Speech is the most important man attribute, but it may beco inhuman without love. Our Spe may be angelic or devilish accord as it has or lacks the spirit of Chr

ARTHUR H. KOLSTI
CHARLES D. HUTCHINS
CHARLES F. JACOBS
LOWELL M. ATKINSON

Great Words Of Faith: The Church

NEW COMMUNITY

ıur H. Kolsti, Lyonsville Congregational Church, La Grange, Illinois

But we are a colony of heaven. Philippines 3:20 (Moffatt)

s unfortunate that our important al holiday, Memorial day, gen- falls about the same time of as the Christian festival of cost. This, among other things, nded to submerge the signific- of Pentecost. While most of us miliar enough with the feasts hristmas and Easter, not too attach any special significance day of Pentecost.

at is the day of Pentecost? In st terms, it is the birthday of hristian church. In the title it- e note the Greek word "pente" fty." The day is so called be- it falls fifty days after Easter. is day the Church has tradition- ommemorated the bestowal of oly Spirit on the Christians at lem. At this time there occur- ıe of those rare spiritual events story that fashioned a motely of believers into a dedicated orking fellowship. This was the l launching of the barque of into the stream of history.

ı sure that most of us feel our ership in the church constitutes hing more than membership in societies. There are a few who with the church because they is the respectable step to take. are our conventional members. turn out in proper fashion on and Children's Day. They give n amount in a conventional f way. There churchmanship ıo further than mere formality. nture the guess that most of l a tie stronger than convention. e here for reasons that go deep our hearts and experience. I hat most of us have experienc- ıt holy dialogue in the heart's sanctuary that tells us this is where we belong. There is something different about the church.

I

But, what is the church? Is it the building? Is that the church? Is it the congregation? Or perhaps it's something of each. We are indebted to St. Paul for a most unique description of the church, the new community made up of those who have taken the step of dedication to Jesus Christ. Turn the pages of his various letters and you'll find him referring in any number of places to the Christian church. In one place, he will speak of the Body of Christ; in another, of the Household of God; in another, of the New Israel. No one of those figures exhausts the meaning of the church.

Let us, however, dwell on the suggestive picture given by St. Paul to his faithful friends at Philippi. He writes, "but we are a colony of heaven." You'll find this text in Moffatt's translation. The Revised Standard Version states, "but our commonwealth is in heaven." The King James Version puts it this way, "our citizenship is in heaven." Scholarly judgment supports Moffatt who has a phrase that well describes the thought of Paul: "But we are a colony of heaven."

Can we catch this picture of Paul? We desperately need an exalted view of the church. Think of this phrase in terms of Roman colonies and apply it to ourselves. What is Paul trying to tell us? Well, for one thing, the Philippian Christians were citizens of Rome. So they would easily have understood Paul's point that as members of the church they were citizens

of heaven, subjects of a higher authority.

We are citizens of a particular county in a particular state in the United States. That describes our official standing. But as those who have sworn allegiance to Jesus Christ we also have a higher citizenship. We know that if we live peacefully with our neighbors, pay our taxes, commit no crimes, and obey the traffic laws — if we live within the laws of the state — then we are good citizens. But we know, too, that as Christians there are other laws to which we are subject. The laws of the state do not touch our attitude toward our neighbors, our inner values and motives, our devotion and worship. In these areas we are subject to a tribunal higher than a state legislature or a national congress. As the Philippians were subject to the laws of Rome, so they as Christians were subject to the laws of Christ.

II

This is what Paul saw as he surveyed the Christian church in the world and pondered her role within the plan of God. Here in the midst of sickness and decay were a group of people born into a way of life qualitatively different from that of the mass of men. But we must think of our own century as well as the first century. All the vices prevalent in Rome under the Caesars are present in our cities and I like to think of the Christian churches of today as God's colonies being erected in the midst of tension and strife. These are God's colonies, commissioned to pioneer and settle an alien land. Here in the church we observe another law, a law written out in the short life of Jesus of Nazareth, a law that provides the sole authority for meaningful living in a world ruled by the God of Calvary.

But as we look about us in the sanctuary we realize that the members of this new realm are not yet full fledged citizens of the mother country. We are in the process of coming. The law of the cross, we member, operates not only as obli tion, but also, as grace and forgi ness. We have not qualified for t citizenship; it is ours as a gift. T point is not that we are perfec citizens of heaven, but that we subjects who have accepted their countability to higher authority.

As a Roman colony, the Phil pians were not only subject to t laws of their mother country, they gave their allegiance to t Emperor of Rome also. So P would remind us in like manner t we are subjects of the King. This another way of expressing the Lo ship of Christ. He is the Soverei Head of this colony, we are his su jects. He is more than the founder the colony; he is the living preser within her walls. In our schools a government offices we hang pictu of George Washington. The memo of this man lends meaning to c citizenship. With Jesus, the Found of our colony, it is quite differe We do place his picture in the chur because he is a memory. He is living Lord who even now dire the activity of the colony. We a citizens of Heaven by virtue of c common direct allegiance to t King.

III

It is this matter of supreme loya that sets off the church from t world. There is a tension that exi between the colony and the su rounding land. The recurring trage of history has been that too often t church and society have been ind tinguishable. It's an old story th goes back thousands of years to t days of ancient Israel. God had ch en Abraham and trained his poster to be the elect nation. As this nati grew and prospered, many began equate God's commonwealth wi attitude that the prophets thundere It was this attitude that brought t desolation of Israel. So today the

e ever present danger that be- we have a comfortable society, ay believe we have a good so- because we have the means to beautiful churches, we may be- that society is essentially better n. When the distinction between hurch and the community dis- rs the moral power of the h wanes.

recent years we have seen a re- nce of interest in Christian s in the art of worship and h architecture. Protestants have a great deal of time to the re- ation of forms of worship and tudy has not been without bene- et one often wonders if part of nterest in liturgics serves as an e from the more gaping prob- of the church. The church that heir of the prophets often shud- n the face of controversy. The h that proclaims the Gospel of s herself split by the ugly sin of n. The church of the martyrs prefers comfort to the cross.

e little story is told of a preach- o used a rhetorical question in to children. He asked, "What that lives up in a tree, has a body, a bushy tall, beady eyes vhiskers?" The audible answer e little boy came back, "God." e boy was leaving church, his asked, "What on earth did ean by saying that?" The boy d, "Oh, heck, I knew it was a el, but he ought to have been g about God."

church's commission is to talk v about God and his ways. To le the fire and smoke of Sinai, about the cross with its judg- upon all areas of life and its se of redemption. "We are a of heaven." There's a higher higher order, a higher author- fore whom we are called to our knees and bow our heads. ng under the laws of the moth- ntry, we owe allegiance to the and we exist to serve the in- of the King. After all, the prime purposes of a colony are to promote the interests, culture, and prosperity of the mother country. Dr. McKay in speaking of the church uses the intriguing phrase, "the historic organ of an eternal purpose." The visible institution of the church is the tangible expression of a Divine purpose that weaves within and beyond history. The church is God's vehicle of redemptive concern.

IV

How do we spell out the duties of this redemptive concern? We go back to that little room where Jesus knelt to wash his disciples' feet. "For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you." The redemptive community is simply the community of service, the fellowship of concern.

Dr. George A. Buttrick once wrote a few lines in reference to the clergy:

Some preachers see nothing but things—
Church buildings, year books, and card catalogues.
Other preachers see faces—
Faces wistful and sin scarred, faces lonely yet brave.
The Master saw nothing but faces.

Can we not insert the word "churches" and find just as much truth in the poem.

Some churches see nothing but things—
Church buildings, yearbooks, card catalogues.
Other churches see faces—
Faces wistful and sin scarred, faces lonely yet brave.
The master saw nothing but faces.

What do we see within the church —things or faces? What excites us most? What evokes the most discussion? Do we ever get as excited about our Christian world mission as we do about building problems? Do we show more interest in receiving a refugee family than a financial report? Are we more concerned with the pet-

ty details than we are with the grand affirmations of the faith? Are the things that concern us the things that concern Jesus? Have we let Him run the colony? We cannot expect others to take His concerns upon themselves: they do not have the cross, they do not have the hope, they do not have the promise. But we "are a colony of heaven."

Pentecost is an appropriate occasion to ask ourselves, how are we doing as such a colony? Recall the account of the Spirit's bestowal in the Book of Acts and mark the requirements of a great church.

1. "They were all together in one place." They were not divided and scattered. They were one in basic purpose.
2. They had the Holy Spirit. T were conscious of the Li Christ in their midst and yielded to Him.
3. They spoke in tongues so all men understood. Theirs a universal Gospel. They s not alone of and to the w man, the brown man, or black man, but of all men.
4. They proclaimed the work God. Their attention was no the petty details but on mighty acts of God.
5. They realized anew the v of the prophets for one h universal community of Go

Can we catch this vision of colony of heaven?

THE TRUE CHURCH

Charles D. Hutchins, Inman Memorial Methodist Church, Jacksonville, Flo

It seems that one of our tasks is to try better to understand the nature of the "true church." Does properly understanding its nature depend on believing creeds or dogma, or is the "true church" a way of life? Schliermacher held that religion was man's feeling of dependence upon God. Few of us realize that "true religion, namely a fundamental affirmation of the meaning of life, is something without which no human being can be healthy in personality."

Our Christian religion has always been a minority movement. Within that movement there has developed our Protestant witness for truth. Christians today need to understand the nature of the "true church" because within the framework of Christianity there is a need to re-define the church. Morever, we should try to discover which of our churches is closer to the "true church." The importance of our understanding the nature of the "true church" has been given by Cyprian: "There is one God, and Christ is one, and there is one church, and one chair founded upon the rock by the word of the Lord. Whoever he may be and what he may be, he who is not in Church of Christ is not a Chris He can no longer have God fo father who has not the church fo mother."

Henry C. Munro tells us that need always to think of the ch in two senses: The church as a d institution ordained of God as means of carrying forth his pur in the world; and the churches, w exist as social institutions subje the same influence as any hu organization. God is always wo through his leaders, seeking to the true church into being out o visible churches men have for When we think of the true ch which God ordained, we are thi of the potential church toward w He is leading and beckoning us. visible church, on the other han a very human and imperfect ins tion."

How will I identify the church" of which Dr. Munro spe How do I know that Protestan has the "potential" to become "true church?" Why do I believe

vn "visible church" is an agency ich God is working to call the church" into existence? To r these questions is to tell just I am a Protestant.

istianity of yesterday gave birth denominations. Their birth has t us that it is better to have in doctrine than to have in heart. Christianity of today birth to the necessity for a pro- dentification of that church it lers as the "true church." Its fication depends not on creeds, it to be found in dogma. The church" must be a way of life ht about by the faith Jesus had He called His Father by the of God.

I

w will I identify the "true h" of which Dr. Munro speaks? e the "true church" has four teristics: ecumenicity, aposto- catholicity, and holiness.

"true church" has ecumenicity. umenical I mean a world-wide ship among Christians. Writes rd Hodgson: "It had come to this in the first centuries of our nd then, in the year 451, the os of the Christian Church met ncil at Chalcedon, they opened report with the words 'the holy ecumenical synod.'" Paul, in his to the Romans, speaks on ecu- ity: "In our one body we have ber of members, and the mem- ave not all the same function; , for all our numbers, we form dy in Christ and we are sever- embers one of another" (Ro- 12: 4-5, Moffatt).

"true church" has apostolicity. ostolic I mean possessing the gs of the apostles and distribut- eir message on a mission-mind- edule. "This is why the Wis- f God said, 'I will send them ts and apostles, some they will d some they will persecute'" 12:49, Moffatt).

"true church" has catholicity. By catholic I mean universal-spread- ing throughout our world and exist- ing for all mankind. Paul speaks on catholicity in his letter to the Gala- tians: "Then the so-called 'pillars' of the church, James and Cephas and John, gave myself and Barnbas the right hand of fellowship. Our sphere was to be to the Gentiles, theirs to the circumscised" (Galatins 2:9, Mof- fatt).

The "true church" has holiness. By holy I mean set aside for those serv- ices that give glory to God. "We should worship Him in Holiness and uprightness all our days within His presence" (Luke 1:75, Moffatt).

II

How do I know that Protestantism has the "potential" to become the "true church?"

We Protestants are ecumenical. Says Dr. Hodgson: "Ignoring for the sake of convenience certain minor differences, Christendom today may be thought of as consisting of seven great families: Eastern Orthodox, Ro- man Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinist, Independent, and Metho- dist." My reason for holding to the ecumenicity of Protestants is their active participation in the World Council of Churches.

We Protestants are apostolic. This is true, not only because we are in possession of the writings of the apos- tles, but also because our Protestant missionaries carry the Christian Gos- pel into all parts of our world follow- ing the command of Jesus that "the gospel must be preached to all na- tions."

Protestantism has catholicity be- cause it is — in the words of Claude C. Selecman — "broad enough to embrace all who worship and serve Jesus Christ, and preaches a gospel large enough to meet the spiritual needs of all men."

We Protestants are holy, not only because we worship God, but also be- cause we permit freedom of con- science to our worshipers. That Pro-

testantism has holiness is evidenced by its multitudes of friendly worshiping people, its belief in the Holy Bible, and its understanding of Sacraments as symbols of holiness for believers. "We have in all Protestant Churches" writes Seward Hiltner, "particular acts which may have a deeper meaning than words not only because of their age, but because they symbolize the relation between fundamental religious truth, and the most common acts of life. Baptism is not only ancient; it also symbolizes rebirth in its linkage of earth's most common fluid with spiritual regeneration. The communion links the commonest of man's daily acts, eating and drinking, with the most sublime fellowship."

Christ is calling all Christians today. He calls not for conflict, but for commitment. He calls for God-consciousness over our own self-ri eousness. Greater spiritual power come to our Christianity today if who are called Christians, will c our minds creatively, stir our he fervently, and become transfor persons. Understanding can hel achieve that opportunity to know to find the "true church." This is keynote to our Atomic Age: Ch ian concern generated by crea good will.

"God our Shepherd, gives to Church a new vision and a new l new wisdom and fresh underst ing, the revival of her brightness the renewal of her unity, that eternal message of thy Son, unde by the traditions of men, may be ed as the good news of the new through him who maketh all th new, Jesus Christ our Lord. Am

THE MARKS OF A GREAT CHURCH

Charles F. Jacobs, First Congregational Church, Waterloo, Iowa

Some years go the editors of **The Christian Century** published a series of articles entitled "Great Churches of America." Among the parishes selected for study there was no uniformity in size, in theology, or in polity. There were big churches and small churches; liturgical churches and non-liturgical churches; churches with fat budgets and churches with slim budgets; churches with noted ministers and churches with ministers of little note; liberal churches and fundamentalist churches; nationally known churches and churches scarcely known outside their local community and denomination. When the count was in and the anlysis had been made, one could see certain charcteristics persisting in each of the parishes studied. Each, in its own way, had given substance to the stirring admonition of Isaiah: "O Zion that bringest good tidings, get thee up into a high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the citie Judah, Behold, your God!"

Frequently one hears the rem "That is a great church." What the standards of measurement? I are you to test a church as to w ther it is a great church? Obvio size is no adequate test; church l gets are not; tithing is not; choirs not; popular preachers are no t meter; creeds and polity, though portant, do not assure greatness. not say that the great church not excel in many or all these thi I do insist that these matters a cannot make a church great. W then, sets a church apart — wo of the appellation — a great chu

May I suggest what I believe t unfailing signposts pointing to great church?

I

To begin with, the great ch gives significance to little pe The world is full of what War Deeping has called "rootless pe

ring, waiting to die. Always has had to fight against the of emptiness and futility. Far in Old Testament days, Kohe- ne preacher, having sought life's ng in travel, in education, in ure, in toil, concluded:

things are full of weariness; a an cannot utter it;
at has been is what will be, nd what has been done is hat will be done; and there is othing new under the sun.

I hated life, because what is one under the sun was griev- us to me; for all is a vanity nd a striving after wind.

s is pessimism, of course, set to music. Most of us have at ime entertained such a mood. arious reasons these are difficult to maintain our integrity. Al- a haunting sense of futility is ng hard upon our daily lives.

technological age with its e machines, electronic brains, tom bombs tends to impart to dividual a feeling of insignific- A laborer in a great industry, g through the turnstile day day, one in an unending pro- , may suffer from moods of ness and despair. If you have at your world through the lars of science, your old com- le world-view has been ex- d. Man, far from being created f six thousand years past, is ginably old. The earth, rather eing the center of the universe, iocre star circling the sun; and lar system, viewed in relation vast galaxy to which it be- pales into minuteness. There ople who find that A. E. Hous- experience is theirs:

ler see the morning blink
sun is up, and up must I
wash and dress and eat and ink
look at things and talk and ink
God knows why.

ur Miller in his play, **Death of a Salesman,** has a deeply moving scene. Willy Loman has made a miserable wreck of his life and left a blight upon his family. As Biff, the elder son, prepares for a meeting with his father at a downtown restaurant, the mother says: "Biff, be kind to him. He is only a little boat in a big harbor."

That is an apt characterization of each of us: a little boat in a big harbor. Elton Trueblood comments that one reason so many millions of people actually welcome war is that "war gives significance to little lives." That is the business of the church. When Riverside Church in New York City was opened, massive crowds were attracted to its services. The minister, Dr. Henry Emerson Fosdick, knew that crowds could be deceptive; mass attendance is no barometer of significance. In the end a church must be evaluated by what it does to and for individuals. This, says Dr. Fosdick, was not an easy assignment in a church with a rapidly growing membership. "In one staff meeting after another," he writes "we reiterated the admonition: keep your eyes on individuals; nothing in the long run matters in this church except what happens to them."

Jesus knew what was in man; he knew that man is a mixture of good and evil. But his accent was on man's godlikeness. "You are the salt of the earth." "You are the light of the world," said the Master. He gave little people a sense of cosmic significance. That is one of the marks of a great church: it endows little people with a sense of abiding significance.

II

In the second place, the great church is a teaching church. We were shocked and stunned when **Life** magazine published Wesley Shrader's article, "The Most Wasted Hour in the Week." Vehement deniels were rushed to the press with the promise of more to come. Preachers in thousands of pulpits protested what they

felt to be an unfair assault on Protestant religious education activities. I have no defense to make for the article; it does not, I believe, give an adequate accounting of what is stirring in many major denominations. However, even those who differ with Wesley Shrader radically ought to be grateful to him and to Life for the article. By delivering a blow to a sensitive area in Protestantism, Mr. Shrader has aroused interest in religious education and, I believe, has opened doors to significant improvement in the teaching function of the church. At any rate, in this situation as in war, the best defense is a well planned offense. Let the Protestant churches face the shameful fact: the hour which millions of young people spend in church school is often dull, uninspiring and sometimes destructive to religious attitudes.

If we are to make the kingdoms of this world into the kingdom of our Lord, we must pay more attention to the children who will constitute that kingdom. Protestantism, with its emphasis upon preaching, has sometimes neglected the teaching function. I understand that in the Roman Catholic system teachers outnumber priests two to one. We may not like what they teach, but we are impressed by their determination to teach.

The enormity of our challenge is at once clear when we remember that there are seventy million young people in the United States at the present time and that this number increases by approximately four million each year. Of this number those are five years old and over are in public schools five days a week. The figure changes sharply when we turn to religious education. Approximately thirty-five million of these young people are in our church schools one hour per week. Moreover, sixty percent of those who are in church school at ten years of age will be out at sixteen years of age. Twenty-five million of them have no church connection whatever. Out of these tw ty-five million the Protestant chu has a responsibility for about fift million.

These young people constit both challenge and obligation. T amount of time and money spent religious education has been inf tesimal compared, for example, what is spent on recreation. every dollar spent on religious edu tion seven hundred fifty dollars spent on recreation. Someone has s that the trouble with the Protest church is that "it uses teaspoons wh it should be using steam shovels."

III

Consider another mark of a gr church: it is a preaching chur Admittedly, Protestantism, historic ly, has oversold the sermon. T great church is never just a preach station. There are some things t the sermon, no matter how effect it may be, cannot accomplish. quarter century ago the pendul began to swing in the opposite dir tion and has now moved to a dang ous extreme. "Down with the s mon, up with worship," we said. T pulpit was removed from the cen of the sanctuary and the altar v returned to a position of central portance. Recently, I received p motional literature concerning a n church in a Chicago suburb. "In t sanctuary," said the minister, "th will be no pulpit, only an altar; preaching will be done from altar." Shades of Roman Catholici Do we need to be ashamed of pulpit? Can you not hear a holy m saying: "How beautiful upon mountains are the feet of him w brings good tidings who publis peace . . . who says to Zion, 'Y God reigns!' "

Maurice Egan, a Roman Catho says that if the Protestant chu dies, the cause will be the serm I am inclinded to agree with h though for radically different reas If the Protestant church ever die

e because it neglected the ser-
The preacher belongs to a good-
llowship. Saint Luke reminds
t "Jesus went through cities and
es preaching and teaching."
one has said that the preacher
ing directly to his people is still
reatest show on earth. Few will
distinction as renowned preach-
ut there is little excuse for any
being consistently dull, unin-
g or opaque. What a privilege
erpret for men and women the
of Christ! To stand in the pulpit
peak "to people looking up!"

ntrary to much opinion, sermons
t arise in a study behind closed
. Sermons arise out of the total
iences of a minister and his con-
tion. At best the sermon repre-
a bit of the minister's heart torn
nd given to his people. If the
h is slipping in America; if peo-
re deserting it for ball games,
sion, and the parks; then maybe
eason is that the minister has
rated his job as a preacher;
e he is offering stones for bread.
son once said that he heard a
ter "who sorely tempted him
to go to church again." The
her's message did not speak to
eds of his listeners. "Cease, O
nauthorized talker," said Emer-
to prate of consolation and re-
ion and spiritual joys in neat
alanced sentences, for I know
men who sit below. Hush
y, for care and calamity are
to them. Here is Mr. T., the
naker, whose daughter has gone
and he is looking up through
ectacles, to hear what you may
in his case. Here is my friend
scholars are leaving him and
ows not what to turn his mind
t. Here is the stage driver who
undice and cannot get well.
s Mr. B., who failed last week,
e is looking up. O speak things
m, or hold your peace."

IV

In, the great church is always doing business on the frontier. It is never satisfied with things as they are. It is motivated by the Spirit of the Galilean who commissioned his disciples to take the Good News to the ends of the earth. The great church is conscious of what John Keats called "the giant agony of the world."

The church has never been so vital as when it has been on the growing edge of things, countenancing brawls, riots, scourgings and dangers. Its concern is as wide as the human family. Someone has remarked that the church interested only in itself has aleardy ordered its tombstone. Halford Luccock gives a graphic picture of the church that has lost contact with the frontier. "Suppose the church after Pentecost," says Dr. Luccock, "had shown the same spirit and followed the same conduct as many churches today, what would have happened . . . Suppose the members had said: 'We're sitting pretty. We have the most eloquent preacher in the city and 3000 conversions. Not bad; not bad at all. All we need to do is to put the finances on a sound basis, forget this extravagant nonsense about Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth.' What would have happened? We do not need to guess. We know. The church at Jerusalem did that just a generation later. It died. The Christian church was saved by its outgoing evangelistic and missionary passion. As it was in the beginning it is now." In fact, the church that has no concern for the world beyond its own doors may become positively ugly. The members may be at ease in Zion, enjoying a peace of mind to which they have no right in a world where each day the choice must be made between the quick and the dead. Such a church contains the seed of its own death. The pallbearers are waiting just outside the door. The church worthy of the name Christian will constantly be asking: Are we concerned with anything outside the

church itself? Are we tribal minded? How many of our members belong to organizations whose purpose is to promote understanding between people, to develop the world mind?

V

Finally, the great church is a redemptive fellowship. In the beginning, above all, the Christian church was a fellowship. That fellowship became so powerful that for a time it was reported that Christians had all things in common. The fellowship was not always perfect. The correspondence of Saint Paul bears abundant witness to the imperfections of the early church. Dr. Goodspeed tells us that in the Corinthian letters Paul takes the roof off the first century church and lets us see what was going on the inside. What we see is shocking. The congregation has divided into warring factions. Some consider Paul an inferior apostle. Immorality, jealousy, strife, licentiousness, enmity, drunkenness — all were there but, despite all these manifestations of evil, the first church was a fellowship. In his final hours Jesus gave to his disciples the cup and the bread in whose intense fellowship is hidden the hope of the world.

The rest of what I say is autobiography. Last summer, in company with my mother, I returned to the community where I lived as a child. The three institutions, outside the home, which influenced my life were the country store, the country school, and the country church. The school is gone. The store is still doing business. The church, now abandoned and leaning in the direction of the prevailing wind, has become a storage place for a farmer's grain. As I stood with my eyes fastened on the old building, the years dropped away; "in a moment, in the turning of a thought" I was a child again.

I was caught in a rush of memories. I saw the little structure div by a central aisle with a stove either side, the women seated on side and the men seated on the er. I saw the minister, great, wa hearted man, stride down the and take his place on the rostru heard him call for the childre come forward and sit in the chai his left to make up the Suns Choir. There no rehearsals — but we sang! I saw Miss Ivy seate the organ, her fingers wande daintily over the keys, and I h the music of the old reed organ. off I could hear the congrega singing the old hymns — "Shall Gather at the River," "There Is F er in the Blood," "Leaning on Everlasting Arms," "In the Sweet and By," "Almost Persuaded," "L I'm Coming Home."

In silence I turned back to my It had been a great experienc want to say to you that tiny ch tucked away in the folds of the souri hills was a great church. It not great in theology. In this res mine has been a long pilgrimage. it was great in fellowship. No who belonged to that fellowship a spiritual orphan — a speck of mic dust lost in a cosmic swirl. In intense fellowship of that small gregation six young men went f to proclaim the mysteries of the k dom of God.

I have not listed all the mark a great church. You will want to others. But I have spoken of wh believe are the unfailing charact tics of such a church: it give significance to little people; it teaching church: it is a preac church; it is always doing busi on the frontier and, above all, it redemptive fellowship, the koino through which all of us come to k of the power and the goodnes God.

GLORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

ll M. Atkinson, St. James Methodist Church, Elizabeth, New Jersey

he forty-seventh chapter of l we read of a prophet who a vision of hope to a group of With eager words, Ezekiel to his disheartened people, s in an alien land. He pictures sanctuary in Jerusalem. It is heir own temple in their own And from beneath the sanctu- ing waters will flow through ste places of the world, bring- w life everywhere.

salem is a rock fortress situat- wilderness. It is located on a ridge from which one may iles of desolate and crumbling nd wild country falling away complete desolation of the Sea, which supports no life at ner in its waters or on its shor- at prophetic faith it must have d for Ezekiel to promise liv- ters for this arid wilderness! cret of his faith is his belief Church. It was the church that bring life into the areas of It was the church that was e a wilderness into a garden th and beauty. So the great man gives to the discouraged n a foreign land an astounding cy of hope.

question now insists on being Is Ezekiel's vision only pro- or is it also history? I wonder can answer the question with urance that is grounded upon dge of the actual facts. For it emely important that Christ- ow whether the church is an on of monumental dullness, believe, which has somehow d its own usefulness into the day; or whether it is true church has been the creator esome life and the rich values e civilization.

rt Chesterton once debated ue of the church with an who judged the church by f its failures. Of course, said Chesterton, the church has had failures, for it has attempted such tremendous things. It has given modern civilization its mind, its conscience, its spiritual life, its noble institutions. It has tamed barbarians and wielded mighty powers. No wonder it has made mistakes, doing so great a work! But atheism has no history. It has never been productive. It has built no institutions, created no cultures, ennobled no peoples. Because it has no history, it has no errors, except the final error of doing nothing.

We all need to be prepared to speak with a confidence that puts atheism on the defensive. We do not judge the church. The church judges us. For Ezekiel's prophecy has become history, and every Christian has the right to know the rich story of his Christian past.

I think that is in the early pages of **The Christian Criticism of Life** that Lynn Harold Hough speaks of the tragedy of the man who has lost his past. He is adrift in the present because he does not know his past — who he is, or who are his people. It is tragic for modern Christians to lose their past. There is a glory in the records of the church that can give us new heart and hope and new confidence as we tell others of the "good news" in our own day.

I

The new life in a weary world. It was a world grown prematurely old and weary into which there came the living waters from the earliest Christian Church. The Epicureans taught that the way of life was to avoid pain. The Stoics counseled control of the things in our power and endurance of the things beyond our power. The philosophies of the Roman world could at best suggest to men some practical way of living in a universe that they were unable to understand

and in which they did not quite dare repose their trust.

In this tired world that has lost heart and hope, the Christian religion was like a fresh spring of water, renewing life and faith and hope and joy. The religion of the Lord Jesus was held by a very tiny minority; but it was an invincible minority. Discouragement could not halt them! Defeat could not halt them! Death could not halt them! It was said of them that "they love all men and are persecuted by all." This was not just rehetoric. They clung to their faith at fearful cost. They were not understood by most of the Empire. Some thought them cannibals, holding strange secret orgies in which mystic words were uttered, "Eat my body." Even such a moral man as Tacitus thought of the Christians as wretched criminals. But those who understood described them as "the soul of the world," and as "those who hold the world together." A tiny minority of martyrs who took the Cross seriously made their blood the seed of the Church.

The conversion of Rome. When Constantine accepted the Christian religion, he took a stand the political significance of which indicated the growing popularity of Christianity as a powerful religious fellowship in the Roman Empire. So the faith of a struggling minority came to be the accepted religion of the State.

There were two immediately obvious consequences. First, the Christians could no longer evade a real responsibility for the life of the Empire. Secondly, the purity of the faith was threatened by the incoming number of new members whose motives were not exclusively religious. In any event, Christendom was entering upon days of power, and on the banners of Empire was no pagan insignia, but the Cross of Christ, with the famous words, "**In hoc signo vinces!**"

Antony, the Egyptian hermit, represents the movement of earnest Christians toward a purer life. Troubled by the union of church and st the hermits repudiated this world the name of eternal sanctions t found their origin in the Div World. When the hermits gathe in colonies and became monks, th was beginning a type of religious through which streams of living w ers were indeed to flow through d ert places in many lands.

The Dark Ages and the taming the barbarians. When the barbari conquered Rome, the church c quered the barbarians. The story the Dark Ages is a story of li wherever we witness the courage enterprise of the missionary mo who counted life itself not too gr a risk if lives could be claimed Christ.

Patrick in Ireland, Colomba Scotland, and Boniface in Germ were men of spiritual energy and p sonal valor whose inspiration in own lives increases in potency as come to a fuller understanding their faith and achievement.

In a turbulent age, the monaste were like lighthouses of religi faith and intellectual earnestness moral power. So the living wat flowed in Dark Ages.

The Middle Ages — achievem and decadence. One is likely to tempted to stress the decadence the latter Middle Ages against wh Luther rebelled until one has forg ten the genuine achievement of s an age as the 13th century, wh has been called, not unjustly, greatest of centuries. Yet the genu achievement of the Middle Ages c stitutes one of the glorious chap of our past. It was the Middle A that gave us the great cathedrals the great structural faith for wh they stand. Universities were fou ed. Thomas Aquinas made all kn ledge captive to Christ. Francis Assisi recovered the lost fragrance a New Testament simplicity. Da gathered the golden memories of silent centuries into a poem tha like a singing cathedral. The logic

iddle Ages laid the foundations odern science. The living waters l with might on the face of the in the 13th century.

Reformation. Probably the mportant thing to be said about eformation is that it represents hurch as its own best critic. r took his stand against some s of the life of the church in ame of standards that the itself had given him. His ement was the clarifying of l matters. The definitive ele- of the Christian religion were tized in his thinking. Man ng under God in moral respon- and finding salvation only h the Grace that leads him to his life into the arms of the God — this was Christianity ther. So the living waters once ran in very deep channels.

Wesleyan Tradition. It is easy understand John Wesley and to be his conversion in terms of an nal glow. The real contribu- f Wesley is two-fold. First, his sion meant for him complete der to the God who died for So he took his place in that lical succession that represents al Christianity. Secondly, his nce meant for him empower- o that he was capable of con- and effective social action. It genius of the Wesleyan tradi- combine a profound evangeli- st in Christ and a powerful ination to take that social ac- hich will make the kingdom of he kingdom of good in this Wesley's last letter encourag- lberforce in his fight against ve trade. Wilberforce was a list convert, who harnessed ngelical experience to a great ause. He gave his life to fight- e slave trade in the British . He was an old man when his s finally passed. On that me- e occasion, Pitt said he would be Wilberforce, the man who a continent of slaves, than Napleon, who reduced a continent to slavery. The living waters were moving with healing power into the sore spots of earth!

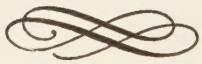
II

"Wasteland" — so T. S. Eliot describes our world — frozen into futility by a benumbing lack of faith, afraid of the atomic powers we have discovered because we have developed no corresponding powers of moral control, lacking in basic agreements, our culture far, far spent. How like the Judaean wasteland we are, reaching at last to the lifeless salt shores of the Dead Sea of despair!

Yet the living waters still flow! The Living God still moves with vital power in the hearts and minds and conscience and will of men, giving life an inner glory and outward effectiveness, as in the great ages of old. The despair of our contemporaries is but a challenge to our faith.

What can we do — we who are nameless, as the great world goes, we who live quiet, unnoticed lives while the world moves on unheeding? It is just such nameless multitudes of the faithful who have been the channels through which living waters have flowed throughout the ages. For the men and women and children of faith are not nameless to God! They are his invaluable colleagues in His mighty work in this world!

Chesterton once said that the pagan regarded the slave as a tool, an ax to cut wood. Over against this is the attitude of the Christian Church: "The Church did not denounce the cutting; but she felt as if she was cutting glass with a diamond." Your life is of value as you give it to God. The glory of the church in the past is our present inspiration because faithful Christians once possessed a splendor in their own souls. It is for us to strengthen ourselves in the recovery of this noble past and so make sure our own contribution to the church that is to be!

Can you see the vision of living

water flowing from the church, moving like a mighty stream into every brown desert and making it green, bringing life and health and healing into every wasteland? The vision prophecy. But it can also be histo if we will have it so!